

CUSTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
PO BOX 385  
CHALLIS, ID 83226  
(208) 879-2360  
(208) 879-5246 (fax)

April 28, 2021.

Dear Congressman Simpson,

Thank you and your staff for the opportunity to apply for a Grant through the Dept of Agriculture to build a new jail and help with our non-compliant detention facility.

As you know Custer County is the third largest county in the State with just under 5,000 square miles and 4,628 people. We have 3.1 million acres with a tax base of 157 thousand of private land, which gets smaller every year.

The need for a new detention facility couldn't be greater. As a County Commissioner it is our job to ensure safety in the county, and we are failing at that with this outdated and noncompliant jail. This disintegrating building is a danger to our inmates and our security personnel. The saddest part of this situation is the fact that people who have committed serious crimes are not being detained because we simply do not have available space, and the cost to transport and house criminals in another county is challenging.

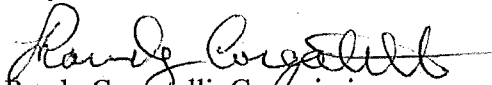
We have had numerous attempts to fund a new facility within the County but with a poverty rate of nearly 20% these attempts have failed. This is a serious problem that has vexed Custer County for too long. A funding award would solve this issue and undoubtably save lives.

We thank you once again for giving us this prospect to make our community safe and we look forward to helping you with any other information you might need.

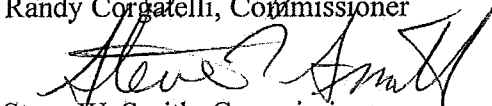
Sincerely,



Wayne F. Butts, Commissioner Chairman



Randy Corgatelli, Commissioner



Steve W. Smith, Commissioner



CUSTER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

130 S 9th Street  
P.O. Box 344  
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Telephone: 208-879-2232  
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Sheriff  
Stuart Lumpkin

Chief Deputy  
Justin R Mitchell

April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021


Department of Agriculture Community Facilities Grants,

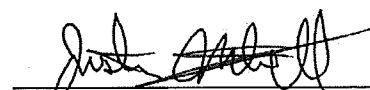
This letter is in support of a new Detention Facility for the Custer County Sheriff's Office in Challis, Idaho. The current Custer County Jail was built in 1911 and is currently the oldest operating jail in Idaho. Attached to the jail in the late 1980's is a single wide trailer which was supposed to be temporary office space until a new facility could be built. This office space is a hazard to employees, expensive 911 equipment (rain and snow leaks throughout the ceiling during winter months). A 110 year old jail, makes operating extremely difficult as we can not obtain parts and other equipment to keep up on maintenance. The jail is considered to be a historical building, and therefore it cannot be destroyed or deviated from the original floor plan of the jail. Also due to the age of the jail it is not an ideal secure facility.

The current jail only allows housing of 8 male inmates, although at this time only 6 male inmates will be housed due to one of the cell doors not functioning. No females are housed at the Custer County Jail and are transported to other facilities if other counties agree to house the females. These transports cause several issues for the Sheriff's Office and the community; the Sheriff's Office is paying deputies overtime, leaving areas of the rural County unprotected for hours. This then causes other deputies in different parts of the County to respond to calls in the area which are not covered by the transport deputy. The deputies could have to travel for transports for over 4 hours one way if it is the only available housing for the female. This causes an issue for the community as now they are waiting for extended periods of time for a deputy to arrive.

The money being spent towards housing out of county female inmates would be more effective if a current facility was built in Custer County which housed female inmates. The costs to housing female inmates is not cost effective to Custer County considering some of the following expenses, housing fee (\$55 per day), deputies wages, hotel rooms, meals, fuel, and vehicle maintenance.

Considering the difficult problems listed above, we feel it is necessary for a new Detention Facility to be built for the Custer County Sheriff's Office. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

  
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Sheriff Stu Lumpkin

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Deputy Justin Mitchell